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NOVA SCOTIA AND NEW ENGLAND DURING THE REVOLUTION

At the beginning of the American Revolution it was not a foregone conclusion that Nova Scotia would continue loyal to the crown of England and that the other British colonies on the continent would all become independent. Yet writers dealing with the period frequently assume that Nova Scotia was from the first in a class altogether distinct from that of the revolting colonies, and therefore do not think her exceptional course of action worthy of remark. For instance, Green¹ says that all the colonies "adopted the cause of Massachusetts; and all their Legislatures, save that of Georgia, sent delegates to a Congress which assembled on the 4th of September at Philadelphia". In this statement Nova Scotia is altogether ignored. But, had this province made a fourteenth state in the Union, there is little doubt that the difficulty of England's holding Canada, especially during the season when the St. Lawrence was frozen, would have been enormously increased; and it is probable that England, like her rival France, would have been driven out of America. The attitude of Nova Scotia during the contest has therefore more than a merely local interest.

At first sight it is difficult to understand why Nova Scotia did not follow the lead of New England. The character of the population did not promise any high degree of loyalty. It was composed largely of emigrants from New England, who had only recently, at the time of the Stamp Act agitation, left their old homes; and there was another element of danger to the British connection in the presence of a number of Acadians who had escaped the intended doom of exile or had contrived to return to the province. In April, 1761, Belcher reported that there were 1,540 Acadians who had not yet submitted and who were fitting out armed vessels to prey on the trading ships. The hostility of the Acadians usually involved that of the Indians, who were still much under French influence. They

¹ *A Short History of the English People*, New York, 1877, 741.

² Belcher, chief-justice of Nova Scotia, to Lords of Trade, April 14, 1761, Manuscript Volume 37, no. 6, in Provincial Library, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Copies of this despatch and of most of those cited below are in the above-named library, which contains a valuable collection of documents relating to the early history of the province. Some of these are originals; others are transcripts from papers in the British Museum, the Massachusetts Public Records, etc.

numbered in 1764 about six hundred fighting men, a formidable force in a country of small and scattered settlements.¹

It had been part of Lawrence's plan to settle some of the New England troops upon the fertile lands from which they had been employed to drive the Acadians, but these troops had not chosen to remain,² and it was not till the reduction of Louisburg in 1758 that the resettlement of the "vacated" French lands really began, for as long as the Acadians and Indians received encouragement from Cape Breton, new settlers entered the country with their lives in their hands. But within three months after the fall of the fortress Lawrence issued a proclamation³ (with a description attached), inviting applications as well for the "lands vacated by the French as every other part of this valuable Province". He described in detail the unique advantages of the lands at his disposal—extensive forests, rich farms, already cleared, and navigable rivers falling into the Bay of Fundy. With special enthusiasm he dwelt on the fact that the new-comers would find their way prepared by the exiled Acadians, and that they might at once go in and possess fruitful orchards, fields stocked with English grass, and "interval plough-lands", upon which for a century the crops had never been known to fail. In another proclamation,⁴ he promised liberty of conscience to all Protestant dissenters, assured them that they would not be required to give any support to the Church of England, and explained that the government and system of justice in Nova Scotia resembled that of Massachusetts.

The people of New England showed themselves very ready to go in and possess the lands of the unfortunate Acadians. Before the close of 1759, one hundred seven Massachusetts men had received grants in the township of Annapolis; nearly three hundred others of the same province had "signed" for lands in the townships of East Passage, Shoreham (on Mahone Bay), and Liverpool; and the township of Yarmouth had been allotted to a number of applicants, of whom nine or ten came from Philadelphia, and over a hundred from different parts of New England. This by no means ex-

¹ Wilmot, governor of Nova Scotia, to Lords of Trade, June 24, 1764, MS. Volume 39, no. 9. See also Douglas Brymner, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 255.

² Lords of Trade to Lieutenant-governor Lawrence, July 8, 1756; see *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 210. In a few cases, as above, when I have not had access to the document in question, I have made use of the abstracts, in many instances very full, in the above report.

³ Council Book, III, MS. Volume 211, 27, 28. This is a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the governor of Nova Scotia and his council. The original minutes are in the Provincial Library at Halifax, but the references here are always to the copy.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁵ Papers connected with Settlement of old Townships, Nova Scotia Provincial Library, MS. Volume 359.

hausts the list of immigrants. In September of this year, Lawrence stated¹ that the total number of families to be settled before the close of 1762 was 2,550, or about 12,250 souls. But it appears that, in a number of cases, the grantees never actually took possession of their lands, for in 1766,² counting the former inhabitants with the newcomers, there were in Nova Scotia only 2,375 families, or 9,789 persons, including what is now the province of New Brunswick. If we may assume the correctness of Chief-justice Belcher's estimate of 3,000 as the number of English inhabitants in Nova Scotia in 1755, it will be seen that the increase was by no means inconsiderable; and had Lawrence been permitted to manage matters as he thought best, it might have been much greater than it was.⁴

The glimpses we obtain of the New England settlers give the impression of an energetic, self-reliant people, jealous, like their compatriots, of any encroachment on their liberty. In June, 1760, the first settlers arrived at Liverpool, N. S., with live stock and thirteen fishing-schooners. Some of the party immediately betook themselves to the Banks to fish, while the rest set up three sawmills, and began to build houses for their families. Both Lawrence⁵ and Belcher reported that the settlements at Horton, Cornwallis, and Falmouth were prospering, but by the end of 1761 Belcher complained of the exorbitant price demanded by the New-Englanders for their labor.⁶ He said that, while the Irish were willing to work "in common labour" for two shillings per day, the New-Englanders would not work for less than four.

Of all the new settlers, the people of Liverpool⁷ seem to have been most imbued with the spirit of their Boston brethren. In the

¹ Lawrence to Lords of Trade, September 20, 1759 (enclosure), *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 218.

² Abstract of number of inhabitants, etc., December 31, 1766, MS. Volume 43, paper 15.

³ Belcher's opinion on removal of Acadians, of July 28, 1755, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 206.

⁴ He was informed by a letter from the Lords of Trade, dated August 1, 1759, that his duty with respect to the lands was simply to receive and transmit proposals. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 218; Council Book, III, MS. Volume 211, 95, 96. About this same time there were extensive schemes on foot to bring colonists from the other American colonies and from Ireland, but complaints were made that difficulties were thrown in the way of those bringing out settlers. See Memorial of Colonel Alexander McNutt, April 17, 1766, MS. Volume 31, no. 53. Several hundred from the north of Ireland were in fact brought over. See Lords of Trade to King, April 8, 1762, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 232.

⁵ Lawrence to Lords of Trade, June 16, 1760, MS. Volume 36, no. 48. See also *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 221.

⁶ Belcher to Lords of Trade, November 3, 1761, MS. Volume 37, no. 11; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 228.

⁷ Council Book, III, MS. Volume 211, 250.

minutes of the council of Nova Scotia, under date of July 24, 1762, is a remarkable document drawn up by the inhabitants of this little sea-coast town, which could then count scarcely more than two years from the day of its first settlement, insisting in no measured terms on their right to local self-government:

We, your memorialists, proprietors of the township of Liverpool, look upon ourselves to be freemen, and under the same constitution as the rest of His Majesty King George's other subjects, not only by His Majesty's Proclamation, but because we were born in a country of Liberty, in a land that belongs to the Crown of England, therefore we conceive we have right and authority invested in ourselves (or at least we pray we may) to nominate and appoint men among us to be our Committee and to do other offices that the Town may want. His present Excellency . . . and the Council of Halifax have thought proper to disrobe and deprive us of the above privilege, which we first enjoyed. This we imagine is encroaching on our Freedom and liberty and depriving us of a privilege that belongs to no body of people but ourselves, and whether the alteration and choice of the Men you have chosen to be our Committee is for the best or not we can't think so, and it has made great uneasiness among the people insomuch that some families have left the place and hindered others from coming, and we know some of the Committee is not hearty for the settlement of this place.

The petitioners complained that the said committee discouraged fishermen by saying that "they want farmers and that the township is full", but "we say, 'Encourage both'". "Therefore we pray", continued the memorial, "that we may have the privilege to chose our own Committee and other officers, as it will greatly pacify us and the rest of the people of the township, and what we must insist on as it belongs to us alone to rule ourselves as we think ourselves capable".

Liverpool was the only place in Nova Scotia to show "public marks of discontent" on the imposition of the stamp-duty.¹ Again, a little later,² this town was the scene of a riotous resistance to the law, as represented in the persons of the sheriff and deputy-sheriff of the county of Lunenburg. These officers had come to Liverpool in pursuit of a schooner that had been seized at New Dublin for some breach of the revenue laws and had escaped. Not seeing her in the harbor, they went into the town to make inquiries, but on the following night a mob of fifty men, armed with sticks and cutlasses, threatened the sheriff's life and forced him to sign a bond for 300l. "not to pursue the schooner any further".

Such manifestations of sympathy with persons engaged in illicit trade were a marked feature of the times in all the American colonies.

¹ Wilmot to Lords of Trade, November 19, 1765, MS. Volume 37, no. 46. See also *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 265.

² Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 45.

With regard to restrictions on trade, Nova Scotia was of course in much the same position as New England. For instance, in the royal commission¹ to Governor Wilmot there is a clause forbidding him, on account of the complaints of London merchants, to assent to any bill by which the inhabitants of Nova Scotia would be put, in her own trade, on a more advantageous footing than those of England. Neither might he assent to bills laying duties on British shipping, products, or manufactures. The tender solicitude for British interests, to the exclusion of all others, went so far that the governor was forbidden to assent to the laying of import or export duties on negroes, which might tend to discourage British trade with Africa; nor might the province protect herself against undesirable immigration by laying any duty on the importation of felons from Great Britain. Wilmot was indeed commanded to suppress the "engrossing of commodities, as tending to the prejudice of that freedom, which Trade and Commerce ought to have, and to use his best endeavours in the improvement of the trade of those parts by settling such orders and regulations therein . . . as may be most acceptable to the generality of the inhabitants". But in the same clause the governor was forbidden, on pain of the king's highest displeasure, to "assent to any bill for setting up manufactures or carrying on trades", which might prove "hurtful and prejudicial" to England. Legge's commission,² dated 1773, is in many clauses identical with that of Wilmot. The clause concerning the slave-trade, and another requiring the governor to do his utmost to facilitate the conversion to Christianity of Indians and negroes, is the same.

In Nova Scotia there was, however, comparatively little reason for popular discontent with the navigation laws. There was practically no manufacturing in the province.³ Two distillers of rum, a sugar baker, and two hatters constituted the list of manufacturers⁴. A little linen was sold by the Irish settlers, but there was good ground for hoping that such an objectionable practice would disappear when the people were more fully employed in the agricultural pursuits which became them. Lord William Campbell went so far as to ask permission to open and use the coal-mines of Cape Breton, and even ventured to issue licenses for the digging of coals. But though he said that the colliery could never interfere with England, his action

¹ Royal instructions, March 16, 1764, MS. Volume 349.

² MS. Volume 349.

³ Michael Francklin to Shelburne, November 21, 1766, MS. Volume 42, no. 6.

⁴ See also Francklin to Hillsborough, July 11, 1768, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 287.

⁵ Campbell to Shelburne, February 27, 1767, MS. Volume 43, no. 1. See also *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 276.

was condemned as irregular and the renewal of the licenses was forbidden.¹ Beyond the simple articles with which in a certain stage of social development every family supplies itself, there was little demand for manufactured goods. This being the case, Nova Scotia offered few attractions to any one whose bent was mechanical or commercial. Farmers might hope to reap abundant crops from the "vacated French lands". Fishermen might be drawn to the province by the number of "ports of safety",² and "the inexhaustible mines of fish", at the entrance to its harbors; but, as we have seen, for the would-be manufacturer there was nothing but discouragement, and as late as 1774³ Governor Legge was able to report, "there is no other kind of business carried on in this colony than fishing and farming".

When the stamp-duties were under discussion, there was not a town in the province deserving of the name. In 1762⁴ even Halifax had a population of only 2,500. Country people are proverbially slower to move and more difficult to rouse than the dwellers in towns, and the disaffected of Nova Scotia seem to have had no leader of any great power or influence. In Cumberland county and on the St. John river there were several men who appear to have had considerable local influence, which was exerted to the utmost on the side of the revolted colonies, but at Halifax, though from time to time persons were arrested on suspicion of holding correspondence with the rebels or for saying that they "thought the Americans were much in the right of it"⁵ no one was charged with any serious attempt to organize resistance to government.

The interests of Halifax itself were indeed all on the side of the established order of things. Then as now it was the chief seaport, the seat of government for the province, and a British naval and military station, and in those days its prosperity, its importance, its very existence, depended on these conditions. Such specie as circulated was introduced into the country by the army and navy⁶

On the other hand, Halifax depended⁷ upon New England for its

¹ Hillsborough to Franklin, February 26, 1768, MS. Volume 31, no. 69; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 283.

² Campbell to Shelburne, February 27, 1767, MS. Volume 43, no. 1; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 276.

³ Legge to Dartmouth, July 6, 1774, MS. Volume 44, no. 37; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 319.

⁴ Account of settlements enclosed with a letter of Belcher to Lords of Trade, January 11, 1762, MS. Volume 37, no. 13½; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 230.

⁵ Papers relating to Crown Prosecutions, MS. Volume 342, paper 77.

⁶ Campbell to Shelburne, September 7, 1767, MS. Volume 42, 20.

⁷ Wilmot to Lords of Trade, June 24, 1764, MS. Volume 39, no. 9; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 255.

supplies of all fresh provisions except fish, and so, in the earlier years of the Revolution, was in constant communication with Boston, the chief center of disaffection. In Governor Lawrence's time even hay was brought from New England,¹ and in 1762 there was not in the town or its neighborhood one family that gained a living by husbandry. The only improved land consisted of a few garden lots and grass fields,² and the lack of roads prevented the country people from bringing in their produce. Campbell complained that it was frequently bought by New-Englanders, who sold it again to the people of Halifax.³ From the first therefore the citizens were fully informed of all that went on in the colonies, to the south.

To Nova Scotia, as to the other colonies, came the notice of the intended imposition of stamp-duties "towards defraying the necessary expenses of defending, protecting, and securing the British colonies and plantations in America".⁴ The familiar story of the way in which this proposal was received does not need retelling. Nova Scotia alone, of all the colonies on the seaboard, submitted without "opposition or objection" to the laying on of the stamp-duties. In her settlements there were no riots, no non-importation agreements, and apparently, except from Liverpool,⁵ no murmurs. The British ministers, however, saw no reason for greater confidence in the loyalty of Nova Scotia than in that of the more southern colonies; and, on hearing of the disturbances in Boston and other places, they instructed⁶ Wilmot "if this evil should spread to the government of Nova Scotia", to use leniency and persuasion at first, but in the case of "acts of outrage and violence", to apply for assistance to the naval and military commanders.

Wilmot reported, however, that "the sentiments of a decent and dutiful acquiescence" prevailed "very powerfully" in Nova Scotia,⁷ and in due time there came by express command of the king a letter⁸ signifying "his highest approbation of the dutiful, loyal and discreet conduct, observed" in Nova Scotia "during the late unjustifiable transactions in other parts of America".

¹ Account of settlements with letter of Belcher, January 11, 1762, MS. Volume 37, no. 13½. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 230.

² *Ibid.*

³ Campbell to Shelburne, May 21, 1767, MS. Volume 42, 15; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 277.

⁴ Lord Halifax to Wilmot, August 11, 1764, MS. Volume 31, no. 38.

⁵ Wilmot to Lords of Trade, November 19, 1765, MS. Volume 37, no. 46. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 265.

⁶ Conway to Wilmot, October 24, 1765, MS. Volume 31, no. 50.

⁷ Wilmot to Conway, February 17, 1766, MS. Volume 42, 5. See same to same, February 9, in *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 266.

⁸ Richmond to Governor of Nova Scotia, June 12, 1766, MS. Volume 31, no. 57.

The Stamp Act was soon repealed, but the mischief it had done did not quickly pass away. It had provoked both the friends and the foes of America to investigate the status of the colonies in relation to the mother-country. Lord Mansfield on the one side, James Otis on the other, agreed in insisting that the distinction between port-duties and internal taxes was without foundation. This idea spread and trade restrictions soon began to be regarded as worse than arbitrary taxation—"the more slavish thing of the two".

But the ministers were by no means prepared to give up the contest. At the moment of repealing the Stamp Act they took care to assert their rights over the colonies by "an Act for Securing the just Dependency of the Colonies on the Mother Country"; and the very announcement of the repeal of the measure that had proved so obnoxious was couched in language of irritating condescension.¹ One blunder followed another. Relief to the trade interests of America was promised, but little was given. The year 1767 saw another attempt of the British ministers to raise in America a revenue for military purposes by the imposition of taxes on tea and certain other articles. In many of the colonies this was met by a revival of the non-importation associations, and in February, 1768, the legislature of Massachusetts passed resolutions protesting against the new taxes, and adopted a circular letter to send to the other assemblies of North America.

This letter is interesting as an expression of the political creed of Massachusetts at that time, but its contents are too well-known to need repetition. We are concerned with it chiefly as an attempt to bring about concerted action on the part of the colonies, a matter which former experience had shown to be of extraordinary difficulty. The representatives of Massachusetts evidently dreaded giving offense to the assemblies of the sister colonies, and eagerly disclaimed any ambition of dictating to them or taking the lead. But they assumed throughout that these other assemblies were at one with them on the main points in dispute. They did not doubt apparently that even Nova Scotia would join in their protest. On the other hand, the

¹ Conway to Wilmot, March 31, 1766, MS. Volume 31, no. 52: "You will think it scarce possible, I imagine, that the paternal care of his Majesty for his colonies or the lenity and indulgence of the parliament should go further than I have already mentioned—yet so full of true magnanimity are the sentiments of both, and so free from the smallest colour of passion or prejudice that they seem disposed not only to forgive but to forget those most unjustifiable marks of an undutiful disposition, too frequent in the late transactions of the colonies. . . . A revision of the late American trade laws is going to be the immediate object of Parliament nor will the late transactions there, however provoking, prevent I dare say, the full operation of that kind indulgent disposition prevailing both in his Majesty and his Parliament to give to the trade interests of America, every relief which the true state of their circumstances demands or admits."

rulers of that province, from Hillsborough,¹ secretary of state, to Francklin,² the lieutenant-governor, expressed much confidence in the loyalty of Nova Scotia. At the same time they declared that the proceedings of Massachusetts were "of a most dangerous and factious tendency, calculated to inflame the minds" of the king's "good subjects in the colonies, to promote an unwarrantable combination, and to excite and encourage an open opposition to and denial of the authority of Parliament, and to subvert the true principles of the constitution".

Their faith in the "most noble and submissive obedience"⁴ of Nova Scotia did not altogether allay their anxieties concerning the possible effect of the Massachusetts circular letter, even on that exemplary province; and Francklin was directed to prorogue or dissolve the assembly, if it betrayed any inclination to giving countenance to "this seditious paper". When the assembly of Nova Scotia met in the following June, however, Francklin⁵ was able to report that the Massachusetts letter had not even been read, and that there would have been no difficulty in obtaining a strong vote of disapprobation, had it been thought necessary. "The people of this province", he repeats, "have the highest reverence and respect for all acts of the British legislature."

After the appearance of the circular letter, two regiments and four ships of war were ordered from Halifax to Boston. Campbell, who had just returned from a visit to England, wrote⁶ to Hillsborough, urging that the troops might be sent back to Nova Scotia as quickly as possible, on account of the poverty of the people, "whose chief dependence was the circulating cash spent by the troops", and because of danger from Indians. The removal of the fifty-ninth regiment from Louisburg, he declares, will cause "a total

¹ Hillsborough to Governor of Nova Scotia, April 21, 1768, MS. Volume 31, no. 71: "The repeated proofs which have been given by the assembly of Nova Scotia, of their reverence and respect for the laws, and of their faithful attachment to the constitution leave little room in His Majesty's breast to doubt of their showing a proper resentment of this unjustifiable attempt to revive those distractions which have operated so fatally to the prejudice of this kingdom and the colonies."

² Francklin to Shelburne, March 29, 1768, MS. Volume 43, no. 25. *Report on Canadian Archives, 1884, 284.* "No temptation, however great", he asserted, "will lead the inhabitants of this province to show the least inclination to oppose Acts of the British Parliament."

³ Hillsborough to Governor of Nova Scotia, April 21, 1768, MS. Volume 31, no. 71.

⁴ Campbell to Shelburne, February 27, 1767, MS. Volume 43, no. 1; *Report on Canadian Archives, 1894, 276.*

⁵ Francklin to Hillsborough, July 10, 1768, MS. Volume 43, no. 34; *Report on Canadian Archives, 1894, 287.*

⁶ Campbell to Hillsborough, September 12, 1768, MS. Volume 43, no. 49; *Report on Canadian Archives, 1894, 290.*

desertion" of the inhabitants; and the coal-mines, "peculiarly recommended from home not to be touched, may uninterruptedly be worked by any people who think proper to go there". Since the peace Louisbourg had been "the receptacle of adventurers in the Fishery"; so long as the troops were there the civil power could be enforced, but now there was reason to fear "total anarchy". The defense of Halifax, where a royal dockyard had lately been established, added to his anxieties. In case of war it would certainly be one of "the first objects of destruction",¹ for it might² "now be looked on as the northern key of His Majesty's American dominions".

Considering that he regarded the situation in Nova Scotia as so perilous, it is somewhat remarkable that Campbell permitted the publication of the inflammatory matter that appeared in the earlier numbers of *The Nova Scotia Chronicle and Weekly Advertiser*. Its first number appeared in January, 1769, and it kept its readers supplied with the "freshest advices" concerning the progress of events in the colonies to the south. Articles favorable to the king and his ministers occasionally found a place in its columns, but the general trend of the paper was, at this time, rather in favor of the champions of colonial rights. The question of war and of the separation of the colonies from Great Britain were freely discussed six years before the first shot was fired at Lexington, and the people were informed that great numbers of Englishmen looked "on America as in rebellion".³

Nova Scotia still refrained from joining in the loud protests of the New England colonies against taxation by the British Parliament but even in that province were faint stirrings of the desire for larger liberty, and some of the townships ventured to call meetings⁴ for debating questions relating to the laws and government. This alarmed the governor, and the attorney-general was instructed to threaten the offenders with prosecution. When the general assem-

¹ Campbell to Hillsborough, October 25, 1768, MS. Volume 43, no. 56; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 292.

² Same to same, January 13, 1769, MS. Volume 43, no. 67; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 294.

³ The issue for July 11-18 contains a long protest from the *Gentleman's Magazine*, addressed "To the Writers against America", prophesying that if war should occur, "the consequence must be alike fatal to Britain, whether England or America is victorious". And the quarrel is "for what?" "For less than a shadow." In the issue for August 22-29, 1769, appeared an "Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman of distinction in London to his Friend in Boston", approving of the proceedings of that town: "I have learnt with pleasure from the papers that the Bostonians are firm and steady, not to be intimidated by the presence of a military power, and not afraid of enumerating their grievances."

⁴ Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 136.

bly met in June, however, Campbell was able to report¹ that he "did not discover in them any of that licentious principle with which the neighboring colonies are so highly infected".

In October, 1773, Lieutenant-colonel Legge became governor of Nova Scotia. He was at Halifax for about two years and a half, and he made himself so unpopular that his councilors complained of him to the authorities at home, the principal inhabitants of Nova Scotia petitioned for his recall, and Francklin described him as utterly unsuitable for the position of governor from "his capacity, temper, and disposition". Legge represented the inhabitants of Nova Scotia, including even the government officials, as disloyal. Francklin² asserted that the accusations were untrue, but that Legge's conduct had been "too oppressive, vindictive and ungracious"; and that he had "lost the confidence and affection of the King's best subjects". In fact the number of the disaffected had "been greatly augmented by his arbitrary and impolitic conduct". Legge's opinion that there was a considerable amount of disaffection in the province receives some corroboration from other sources. The provost marshal, Fenton,³ complained that many of the members of the assembly were "emigrants from New England, who have brought the same principles as exist there, and are determined", being in the majority, "to give the Governor and all the officers under him all the uneasiness in their power".

To the resolutions of the Congress at Philadelphia, declaring for non-intercourse with colonies that did not accept its measures, Nova Scotia paid no attention.⁴ But as a matter of fact the trade of Halifax was by this time seriously affected, and communication even with England was rendered difficult. In the winter of 1774-1775, when the harbor of Boston was closed by the Port Bill, only one small vessel which was accustomed to make two voyages in the year came from Great Britain to trade at Halifax.⁵ Legge sapiently suggested⁶ that the way to help the loyal colonies was to place fresh restrictions on commerce, and thus force the industrious New Eng-

¹ Campbell to Hillsborough, June 13, 1770, MS. Volume 43, no. 100.

² Francklin to Dartmouth, January 2, 1776, MS. Volume 45, no. 3; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 344. See also Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 316, and Francklin to John Pownall, secretary of the Board of Trade and Plantations, May 4, 1776, MS. Volume 45; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 349.

³ See Extract from Fenton's letter of November 18, 1774, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 326.

⁴ Legge to Dartmouth, March 6, 1775, MS. Volume 44, no. 59. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 328.

⁵ Same to same, July 6, 1774, MS. Volume 44, no. 38; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 319.

⁶ Same to same, March 6, 1775, MS. Volume 44, no. 59.

land fisherman to abandon smuggling and come to the coast of Nova Scotia to seek his living from the sea. Of the bill for restricting the fishermen of New England he had great hopes.¹

At the beginning of the war there appears to have been some danger of Nova Scotia's being lost to England. The Americans made more than one attempt at invasion, though these were so feeble that they have no place in the shorter and more general accounts of the struggle.² Open invasion, however, was not their most dangerous mode of attack. They labored to stir up the Indians and persuade the settlers from New England to revolt, and they let loose a swarm of privateers to harry the coasts and destroy the fishing-boats and trading-vessels of the province. To make matters worse, reinforcements were sent to Gage, and Halifax was left almost defenseless.³ To supplement his meager force, Legge set himself to raise a thousand men in Nova Scotia. With this number under his command, he said,⁴ he could answer for the preservation of the province, though "the colonies to a man" were "prepossessed with great prejudice" against it. But he could place no reliance on the enthusiastic loyalty of the people. The Nova Scotians were not so eager as he expected to enlist in the "Royal Fencible Americans", as the regiment was to be called, and Legge soon decided that the militia were not to be depended on in the event of an attack from the eastern part of New England, as many of them came from there. There were moreover other evidences of disaffection. A quantity of hay purchased for the horses in Boston was burned, and a fire was discovered in the navy-yard. The two men, however, who were thought to be guilty of the act were declared by a resolution of the assembly to be "dutiful and loyal subjects of King George".⁵

Suspected disloyalty and the lack of troops were not the only alarming circumstances of which Legge had to take account in estimating his chances of defending Halifax in case of attack. The fortifications were in a dilapidated state; the batteries were dismantled, the gun-carriages decayed, the guns on the ground. In fact

¹ Legge to Dartmouth, April 24, 1775, MS. Volume 44, no. 61; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 329.

² See Bourinot *Story of Canada* (London, 1898); Edward Eggleston, *A History of the United States and its People* (New York, 1888); Goldwin Smith, *The United States* (New York, 1893).

³ Legge to Dartmouth, July 31, 1775, MS. Volume 44, no. 71. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 334, 335. Lengthy extracts from this letter and many others are printed in Beamish Murdoch's *History of Nova Scotia* (Halifax, 1866). See II, 550, 551.

⁴ See advertisement in *Nova Scotia Gazette and Weekly Chronicle*, June 20, 1775. See also Murdoch's *History of Nova Scotia*, II, 539.

⁵ *Ibid.*

there were no defenses round the town, and it lay "open to the country on every side".¹ Provisions were scarce, partly through the effort to supply the royal troops at Boston, and partly through "the defection of the southern colonies",² upon which Halifax had been accustomed to depend for supplies. It was also difficult to obtain fuel, owing in a measure at least to the fact that persons bringing fuel to market were frequently pressed for the navy. The same cause interfered with the "provision of fish". In addition to his other duties he was now called on to care for the New England refugees, provide them with land, and furnish food to those in need.³ Gage believed that some of these refugees from New England were tainted with disloyalty.

To meet this danger, all persons, "not settled inhabitants", who came into town were required to give notice to the magistrate on pain of being treated as spies, and all innkeepers were to give notice of the arrival of strangers, "on pain of the like penalty". It was also decided⁴ that persons coming from the rebellious colonies, besides taking the ordinary oath of allegiance, must declare their submission to the king and the parliament, and their detestation of the proceedings of the rebels. The magistrates had by a proclamation been required "to apprehend all disloyal persons stirring up or making disturbances", and there seems to have been occasionally some harshness in the performance of this duty. For instance,⁵ in June, 1775, the magistrates of Annapolis county "apprehended Mr. Howard, the dissenting teacher", though "he had not been guilty of any misdemeanour since his arrival in this Province, but had behaved himself discreetly, and as became a good subject". He was nevertheless brought to "town in the custody of the Provost Marshal" and was informed that "information had been given against him, from New England that he had at several times held forth seditious discourses tending to alienate the minds of the King's subjects". The governor had therefore thought it necessary that he should be warned against such behavior, "as he would avoid a commitment to prison and a prosecution at law", but on promising "a dutiful, loyal behaviour", he was allowed to depart.

During the latter part of this year, the rumors of an intended

¹ Legge to Dartmouth, August 19, 1775, MS. Volume 44, no. 76; *Report on Canadian Archives, 1894*, 336.

² See Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 268.

³ Dartmouth to Legge, July 1, 1775, MS. Volume 32, no. 31. See *Report on Canadian Archives, 1894*, 332.

⁴ Legge to Dartmouth, December 22, 1775, MS. Volume 44, no. 86. See *Report on Canadian Archives, 1894*, 342.

⁵ Council Book IV, MS. Volume 212, 254.

invasion of Nova Scotia kept the governor and his councilors in a condition of constant excitement and alarm. But in spite of their anxiety they found time for frequent quarrels among themselves and with the assembly. The governor wished to make certain changes in the constitution of that body.¹ The assembly hotly resented his proposals, telling him with characteristic freedom of language that "dictatorial powers may be necessary to quell insurrections, or to rule a disaffected people, but where no such principles exist, the exertions of such powers will create them". The councilors in their turn declared that the assertions of the assembly were "illiberal, groundless", and could not be supported. All parties besieged the unfortunate secretary of state with charges and countercharges, and in due time came a message from the king that he was displeased with "the dissensions of the Provincial Governments over trivial matters".²

During these early years of the war, Halifax feared attack. There were rumors of expeditions against it that were disquieting,³ for the place was quite without proper defenses, and to make them was a matter of difficulty. Men did not readily volunteer, and the measures adopted to fill the ranks were not successful.⁴ There was moreover opposition to the taxes imposed for the support of the troops. The people were poor, and here, as in the other colonies, taxes were an unwelcome reminder of authority. A petition from Cumberland county shows that considerable democratic spirit was latent there.⁵

We must beg leave to say that it appears to ocular demonstration that those who voted for the said Bills were utterly unacquainted with the state of the Province. The law being intended for the safety of the inhabitants . . . they should have been consulted thereon. . . . The dispute arising between Great Britain and the colonies has no way reached this quarter, nor can we find any grounds of complaint, wherein any acts of violence have been committed or hostilities commenced in any part of this province, except the destroying the fort at St John's River, which appeared rather an act of inconsideration than otherwise, nor are we anyways apprehensive of any danger from them, except this Militia Bill is enforced. Those of us who belong to New England, being invited into the Province by Governor Lawrence's proclamation, it must be the greatest piece of cruelty and imposition for them to be subjected to march into different parts in arms against their friends and relations.

¹ See Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 256-259.

² Suffolk to Legge, October 16, 1775; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 339.

³ Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 253, 272, 273, 280.

⁴ Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 287, 296, 301. See also "Transcripts relating to the American Revolution from the Massachusetts Public Records", MS. Volume 364, paper 6.

⁵ MS. Volume 364, paper 8.

. . . The impossibility of supporting troops in our present exigencies must be obvious to every judicious and impartial eye that beholds us. No medium of trade—not £ 150 cash circulating among us and that at the command of a few persons, no way to pay our debts, but in the way of barter, no commerce carried on with other parts, must consequently render it most calamitous and wretched, nay, it is a matter not to be doubted that the inhabitants cannot do it. [In conclusion they requested the governor] . . . to suspend putting the said Militia and tax Bill into execution, till a further deliberation . . . and to dissolve the present house of Assembly and issue precepts for a new choice.

Meanwhile there were other indications that the New England settlers in the province were far from being satisfied and that an effort to gather the militia might precipitate a conflict.¹ It is difficult to say how much reliance is to be placed on the testimony to this effect, but it seems to have determined the governor not to summon the militia,² and he was evidently unwilling to attempt disarming the disaffected. The attempt could not however have precipitated a very bloody struggle, since the disaffected were without ammunition³ and the loyalists almost as destitute. But besides those suspected of downright disloyalty, there were some who were half-hearted in their support of the governor's authority, and desired to "remain neuter" in case of an attack on the province, which, throughout the winter of 1775⁴ seemed a very real danger.

In the meantime the royal army had been forced to evacuate Boston, and had arrived at Halifax. This was of course a heavy blow to the king's cause, but the coming of the troops, and of the large number of loyalists who accompanied them, increased the strength of Nova Scotia relatively to that of the disaffected colonies. This, however, was not the beginning of the influx of refugees. During the previous year many loyalists had removed to Nova Scotia, and their coming had been encouraged, as has already been mentioned, by grants of land, and, in some cases, of provisions. The authorities appear to have been actuated by something like a settled policy of making Nova Scotia a center and stronghold of loyalty. Upon receiving Dartmouth's despatch respecting the treatment of refugees, Legge issued a proclamation to those likely to seek an asylum in Nova Scotia. This he endeavored to "spread on the Continent",⁵

¹ Captain Stanton to Legge, December 4, 1775; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 341.

² Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 302; Legge to Dartmouth, January 11, 1776, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 345.

³ Legge to Dartmouth, December 22, 1775, MS. Volume 44, no. 86; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 342.

⁴ See Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 300.

⁵ Legge to Dartmouth, October 17, 1775, MS. Volume 44, no. 78. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 339.

though, owing to the scarcity of provisions, he found great difficulty in supplying the promised rations. He entreated¹ that flour and pork and butter should be sent from the British Isles. In the meantime he proposed to make the loyalists an allowance in cash, so that they might supply themselves as best they could at the markets, where, however, the price of all food was doubled. In the spring of 1776, Legge reported² that the rebels were trying to prevent the loyalists from leaving New England for Nova Scotia, but stated in the same letter that he had been informed by Howe that two hundred families, many of them poor, would soon arrive at Halifax. In less than a month there came fifty transports³ crowded with people from Boston who had remained faithful to their old allegiance. Their coming strained to the utmost the resources of the little town, though the governor and council did their utmost to prevent distress, issuing numerous regulations and proclamations.⁴ They fixed the price of fresh meat at one shilling per pound (Halifax currency), of butter at one shilling six pence per pound, and of milk at six pence per quart. They also decreed that no one must charge more than double the ordinary rent for rooms or houses, and declared that the laws against regrating and forestalling would be strictly enforced. But, in spite of all regulations, the price of beef speedily rose⁵ to two shillings and six pence per pound and that of butter to five shillings per pound, while people had to cook in the streets in cabooses from the ships. When Howe sailed with his army from Halifax on June 10, a vast number of women and children were left behind, to be provided for as cheaply as possible by General Massey, then in command of the garrison. With this object he hired a schooner, which he named the *Charity*, to supply the refugees and the invalids with fish. Before winter a number of the refugees, "frightened at the cold and the high price of provisions",⁶ left Halifax, but many remained in the province. As we have seen, Legge had been impressed by the difficulties of his administration and had written constantly of disaffection and danger, which, no doubt, his own lack of judgment tended to increase. For his fears there

¹ Legge to Dartmouth, November 27, 1775, MS. Volume 44, no. 82. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 341.

² Legge to Dartmouth, March 18, 1776, MS. Volume 45, no. 9. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 348.

³ Legge to Germain, April 10, 1776, MS. Volume 45, no. 10. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 349.

⁴ Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 315.

⁵ See *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society*, I (1878), 53, 54.

⁶ Massey to Germain, June 27, 1776, MS. Volume 365, no. 13. See *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 351. See also Massey to Germain, October 6, 1776. *Ibid.*, 354.

appear to have been some reasons; for, though his successor, Lieutenant-governor Arbutnot, announced that all were "in perfect good humour" in the colony,¹ he also described the New-Englanders and Acadians as "bitter bad subjects". On the other hand, early in 1776 as many as five hundred men, including some from the free-spoken people of Cumberland county,² were enrolled in the militia, and the assembly that met in June voted a loyal address consecrating their lives and fortunes to the service of the king.

Of the threatened attacks upon Nova Scotia little need be said. Massachusetts was interested in attempts at invasion, but they were altogether unsuccessful. Throughout the war the authorities at Halifax were suspicious of the intentions of the New-Englanders on their borders, the more so, as there was difficulty in obtaining information of their movements. In the summer of 1779 a counter attack was made. An expedition swooped down from Halifax on Penobscot and took possession of the peninsula where Castine now is.³ An effort to recover it was unsuccessful, and that region remained in the possession of the British till the end of the war.

Perhaps the Indians were the chief source of danger to the province, for effort was made by the agents both of New England and of Nova Scotia to gain or retain the friendship of the Micmacs and the St. John River Indians.

John Allan of Cumberland county, appointed in 1777 Indian agent for Massachusetts,⁴ sought to win the friendship of the red men for the cause of the revolting colonies, but he met with little success. Governor Francklin succeeded in persuading the St. John Indians to give up to him a treaty that they had made with Massachusetts, in which they had promised to send six hundred men to join Washington's army, and he also induced them to swear "on the Holy Scriptures" to hold no communication with Machias, to follow their hunting and fishing quietly, and to warn the English of designs against their garrisons.⁵ It was always Francklin's great object to keep the Indians quiet, for he feared that, once thoroughly roused, they might turn their arms against the English, and an Indian war, vigorously carried on, would cause the utmost confusion and dis-

¹ Arbutnot to Germain, undated, MS. Volume 45, no. 21; see also same to same, December 31, 1776, MS. Volume 45, no. 32, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 358.

² Francklin to Pownall, May 4, 1776, MS. Volume 45, no. 15. See also *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 348.

³ Hughes to Haldimand, June 20, 1779, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1888, 567.

⁴ Hughes to Germain, September 2, 1779, MS. Volume 45, no. 75; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 383.

⁵ Journal of Allan, January 16, 1777, in MS. Volume 364, paper 96.

⁶ Copy of oath taken by Indians September 24, 1778, and January 19, 1779, Dorchester Papers, Volume I, MS. Volume 368, 83.

tress. He was especially apprehensive of this when there were rumors that a French fleet was hovering on the coasts, for the attachment of the Indians to the French was still strong.¹

But if upon the whole the interests of the province were safe on land, the little commerce it possessed was far from safe at sea. As early as November 30, 1775, it was reported that two New England schooners had captured twenty-two ships, and six months later the judges of the Supreme Court actually represented that it would be unsafe to hold the regular courts² in Cumberland, Annapolis, and King's counties because of the danger from "pirates" in the Bay of Fundy. The ground of this judicial timidity is not altogether clear, and it was eventually decided to hold the courts; but, though the seamen did not so far forget their trade as to attack the courts, nothing afloat seemed to be secure. "Rebel pirates", wrote the governor, "have entered our defenceless harbours indiscriminately from Cape Sable to very near this port, landed to the great terror of the well-affected people; cut out several vessels, and done much mischief".³ At a later time it was reported by Hughes, the successor of Arbuthnot, that the "pirates" had stations to the east and west of Halifax, knew what ships came to the harbor, and lay on the watch for them.⁴ Naturally the New-Englanders did not have everything their own way, for privateers were fitted out in Nova Scotia to prey upon such of the commerce of the enemy as might be found.⁵

This kind of warfare provoked much bitter feeling; and other causes were at work to diminish the sympathy that at first existed between Nova Scotia and New England. Chief among these was a kind of natural selection, which at once impelled the warmest advocates of colonial rights to leave a province where they were in the minority, and inclined the loyalists to seek a refuge where their political principles were still held in respect. When at last Great Britain gave up the contest, it was to Nova Scotia that thousands of the vanquished party turned in the hope of building up a new country under the flag and traditions of their forefathers. General Sir Guy Carleton was besieged with memorials and petitions from the loyalists, to which he seems⁶ to have attended with patience and kindness.

¹ Francklin to Clinton, August 2, 1779, Dorchester Papers, Volume I, MS. Volume 368, 84-89.

² Council Book, IV, MS. Volume 212, 318.

³ Arbuthnot to Germain, October 8, 1776, MS. Volume 45; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 354.

⁴ Hughes to Germain, *ibid.*, undated, MS. Volume 45, 70.

⁵ See Council Book, IV, October 14, 1779, MS. Volume 212, 372.

⁶ See numerous letters and memorials in Dorchester Military Papers, II, MS. Volume 369.

Most of the refugees that went to Nova Scotia had collected at New York under the protection of the British army, but they came originally from all the different colonies. They were of all classes, from lawyers, clergymen, and merchants down to slaves. Usually a number of families and single men grouped themselves together in one party, and made application for lands, etc., through one or two men, acting as agents for the rest. In most cases the refugees were conveyed to Nova Scotia and were supplied with rations, tools, and other necessities at the expense of the British government.¹ In spite of this assistance, they suffered many and severe privations. At the close of the war, different parts of Nova Scotia and Canada saw a repetition of the scenes which had occurred at Halifax on the arrival of Howe's army. For instance, it is recorded² that in October, 1782, nine transports, escorted by two men-of-war, arrived at Annapolis with five hundred refugees. Others soon followed. Several hundred were stowed in the church, a building only sixty by forty feet, and the rent of small unfurnished rooms went up to three dollars per week. A little later there arrived at Halifax five hundred loyalists from Charleston, South Carolina, who, being ill-provided with both clothing and shelter, suffered pitiably from the cold.³ Such instances might be multiplied indefinitely. By the summer of 1784, it was estimated⁴ that 30,000 loyalists had settled in Nova Scotia. Their settlement was not effected without a good deal of friction and dissatisfaction,⁵ but the letters of those in authority give the impression of an earnest desire to assist all who had suffered on account of their adherence to the royal cause, and by the end of 1784, Governor Parr was happily able to report⁶ that the refugees were contented and getting on well.

Efforts had been made, both in Nova Scotia and in Canada, to settle them along the international boundary, so as to strengthen the British hold on the country in the event of difficulty with the

¹ North to the Governor of Nova Scotia, May 5, 1783, *Dorchester Papers*, II, MS. Volume 369, paper 181.

² See *Halifax Herald*, May 8, 1897, for an article quoting the "Journal of Jacob Bailey", which is now in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society. See also Parr to Townshend, October 26, 1782, MS. Volume 45, no. 116; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 401.

³ Same to same, December 7, 1782, MS. Volume 45, no. 119. See also Parr to Nepean, January 22, 1782, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 402.

⁴ Parr to Sydney, August 13, 1784, MS. Volume 47, no. 27; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 423.

⁵ Parr to Sydney, April 10, 1784, MS. Volume 47, no. 23; also letters quoted in *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 417-419.

⁶ Parr to Sydney, December 27, 1784, and Parr to Nepean, January 2, 1785, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894, 430.

new republic— a contingency which by the War of 1812 was unfortunately proved to merit consideration. But, apart from questions of defense, the importance to the British provinces of the settlement of the loyalists can hardly be overestimated. In fact, it may be doubted whether the present Dominion of Canada does not owe its very existence to these refugees. The necessity for keeping faith with those Americans who had fought and suffered for the royal cause probably prevented the British ministers from throwing away, at the close of the war, the despised remnants of England's dominion in America, till that time so extensive. Moreover, had they retained the French colony of Canada, then hardly resigned to British rule, and the one British colony of Nova Scotia, with its meager population of 14,000 souls, these provinces, without the loyalists, would not long have been able to resist absorption by the young nation to the south. But the coming of the refugees trebled the population of British descent, and the loyalists carried to their new homes sentiments and traditions of passionate attachment to monarchical institutions and to the British connection, which have borne fruit in the deep-rooted though less demonstrative loyalty of the modern Canadian.

EMILY P. WEAVER.

¹ See Morse's return, quoted in *Report on Canadian Archives, 1894, 412.*